1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

Work in the fields, whether sowing, weeding or harvesting, is nearly always done in large parties. These parties are made up partly of relations by blood or marriage, and partly by friends. Since the Lepchas trace relationship back nine generations on the father's side and at least four on the mother's there is a tendency for most villagers to have some relationship; I should guess that out of a dozen Lepchas of Lingthem taken by chance, a relationship chain could be established between eight of them. But this relationship is not necessary for field-helpers; in nearly all the lists I made there were a few people quite unrelated.

Help in the fields is always repaid with a similar amount of labour; for sowing and weeding the helpers are also always given a meal with meat. At harvesting a meal need not be given to people who volunteer their services, but must be given to those who are asked to help. At harvest payment is given in kind: forty to fifty pounds of rice to an adult worker, a big basket of millet or maize, thirty to forty pounds of buckwheat. Children are given proportionately less. The first person to harvest his dry rice, and the last to harvest the wet, must make a small present of the grain to all the other householders. Because cardamum is a money-producing and not a food-producing crop help with it is paid for in money; a rupee a head is given for work in the fields and Rs. 3/– for carrying a maund[5] to market.

iv

The most general food of the Lepchas is rice. This is prepared in four main ways; boiled whole after husking in water and eaten with meat or vegetables or other seasoning; boiled whole in milk; 'puffed', or ground fine and made into a pudding. This ground-rice pudding is often given to children. Wheat and maize may be eaten in the same way if there is no rice, but they are not liked. Buckwheat is ground and mixed with water and baked on the

[5] The *maund*, which is divided into 40 *seers* is the current measure of weight in India. A maund is meant to represent the load one man can lift, and its equivalent in European measure depends partly on *what* is measured, and partly on *where* it is measured. (Similar confusion can be found in various English measures of agricultural produce such as a bushel, or a truss.) On the Indian railways a maund is equated to 80 lbs., which makes the seer 2 lbs. The Lepchas have their own measures according to the size of the basket used. Since all these measures are very rough I have generally given an approximate equivalent in lbs. avoirdupois.